DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 111 745 SO 008 602

AUTHOR Wise, John H.
TITLE An Appalling Ignorance of the World: The Price of Affluence?
PUB DATE 26 Aug 75
NOTE 25p.; Paper presented to the Annual Conference of the Institute of Australian Geographers (13th, University of Wollongong, New South Wales, Australia, August 26, 1975)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS Educational Diagnosis; *Educational Improvement; *Educational Quality; Elementary Secondary Education; *Geographic Location; Geographic Regions; Geography; *Geography Instruction; Global Approach; Higher Education; Map Skills; Speeches; Student Evaluation; World Affairs; *World Geography

ABSTRACT

Today's students in the Western world show a widespread lack of basic world knowledge. Geography graduates in a Canadian and an Australian university were asked to locate 75 major cities in the world. The results indicated a wide knowledge of cities in the Western world but little knowledge of cities in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Only three out of 75 Canadian graduates could correctly locate the countries of Mali, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau. Eight suggestions to improve geography education call for increases in (1) selectivity of entrants into university programs, (2) numbers and variety of geography courses, (3) infusion of Third World examples into university geography courses, (4) exchange of geography scholars between the Third World and the Western countries, (5) qualified geography teachers to serve in preservice and inservice programs for teachers, (6) mandatory world geography courses at the university level, (7) emphasis in teaching map skills for all educational levels, and (8) recognition that elementary and secondary geography need not emulate university geography courses. (Author/DE)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED111745

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

AN APPALLING IGNORANCE OF THE WORLD: THE PRICE OF AFFLUENCE?

John H. Wise

University of Newcastle,
N. S. W.

SP 008 602

A Paper Presented to the 13th Annual Conference of the Institute of Australian Geographers held in the University of Wollongong, N. S. W., August 26, 1975.

00002

Vignettes for Reflection

(1) Parent: Have you heard about any other countries?
Child (Class 2): Yes! We've done the three things about Holland: dykes, wooden shoes, and windmills.

(2) Child (Class 7): (in a Public Library): Where do you find Africa?
Librarian: What sort of thing do you want to find out about Africa?
Child: Anything. 'Like we have to do this project on Africa?
Librarian (very helpfully): Do you want to know about the people, or animals, or different countries in Africa?
Child: Jus' anythin' about Africa!
(Kindly, the librarian leads the child to the shelves. . . .)

(3) University Lecturer: Do you consider that as a secondary school teacher you might suitably know the name of the country in which Tunis is located?
University Graduate in Geography (student teacher): By rights, I should: but it's something I can brush up on!

(4) University Honours Graduate in Geography (student teacher): I know a lot about fluvial geomorph., but I haven't read a newspaper in four years!

It seems platitudinous to say that we who live in the affluent Western World take much for granted. Scenes of poverty in Sydney, Montreal or Los Angeles may be striking to a person who largely knows only a pleasant suburban milieu but, in comparison with present-day scenes in Mali, Ethiopia or Bangla Desh, they appear effete reminders that a capitalistic system is not necessarily an equitable one. (Even the needy in the U. S. A. include many who can drink their beer straight from the refrigerator.) For most of us, our stomachs are continuously full and, if we really care to face the truth, our economic worries are surmountable. But for many of the world's 4,500,000,000 people, life is short, unhygienic, precarious, without hope and largely forgotten by the rest.

Already, the writer imagines a few readers perhaps saying: "We know all about that: I lecture in Economic Geography!" or "I teach a World Problems course, so what's your point?"

It is true -- the poverty of Man in economic terms is frequently thought to be well-known in different parts of the Western World. For example, Professor T. L. Hills of McGill University in a letter to every Canadian geographer had this to say on behalf of OXFAM in September, 1973:

> I am sure you are aware of the severe drought currently affecting . . . . a broad band of territory stretching from Senegal . . . to Ethiopia . . . . To the people of the region this drought means more than a batch of intriguing academic problems. It threatens their very existence. I am appealing particularly to you because your training as a geographer enables you to understand the complexities of the situation . . . .[2]

We who live in Australia, Canada, the U. S. A. and other affluent countries have so much opportunity to read and hear about starvation in western Africa or such matters as the political aspirations of people in Angola; a Population Conference in Bucharest; relationships between Turkey and Greece: all manner of things. We who live in Australia, Canada and the U. S. A., 5.7 per cent of the world's population with a relatively large proportion of the land surface and other economic resources of the globe, have ready access to newspapers, popular journals, radio and T. V. news broadcasts; well-stocked public libraries: all manner of sources.

There is, then, no excuse for our not knowing something of the world, whether we be geographers or not. Since our education may be as long as twelve years before university study takes place, and since our teachers have university or college diplomas, there is no reason why we or our children should be completely ignorant of the world. Even if we consider that "education" cannot properly be assessed in terms of course credits and sheep-skin certificates, we cannot deny that if we are really interested in a particular matter we shall surely remember something about it, whether it be a fact (a naughty word in the 1970's) such as "Lagos is in Nigeria" or an idea or concept such as Apartheid. Thus, if starvation in the world interests us, we probably would have stumbled unconsciously across and (accidentally) remembered the word "Mali", especially in 1973 and 1974, if only because scarcely a week went by in those months without the media's including some graphic and mapped references to the people and landscapes of that country.[3] Or, if the political evolution of colonial peoples interests us, then we would easily remember and take further interest in such places as Lisbon, Timor, Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Mozambique because these names have been constantly reiterated during the past two years in a wealth of inexpensive and quite reputable literature.[4] After all, we can so

readily remember football or cricket players' names! In short: if certain places are mentioned frequently over a car radio or in commonly-used newspapers and other media, they will stay in our minds, especially is we are interested in GEOgraphy (that, by definition, deals with the world) and not solely in an AUSTRALOgraphy or, say, an AMERICOgraphy that, at its worst, may be defined as an ethnocentric interpretation of the world akin to the Ancient Greeks' impressions of their Oikoumene. Hackneyed excuses such as "Ideas of this kind smack of a return to old-fashioned rote-learning of Capes and Bays" or "I don't bother with facts: I teach concepts!" are not sufficient. In the writer's view, a potential geographer's knowing the ideas of Hagerstrand, Haggett, or Harvey in no way conflicts (methodologically or otherwise) with his or her also suitably knowing the locations and something about the contemporary importance of such places as Accra, Belgrade, Caracas, or Damascus. Indeed, knowledge of such locations -- apart from its value in understanding current affairs -- would probably be useful in considering, for example, whether Hagerstrand diffusion paths on maps of Skane have any applicability in spatial portrayals of the Ashanti near Kumasi. All too frequently, though, the writer over the years has found that, in the affluent Western World, young university graduates in geography who supposedly "have done Hagerstrand" increasingly cannot locate Malmo or even Stockholm (let alone Lund) on an outline map of Scandinavia.

A Widespread Lack of Basic World Knowledge

Before giving further indications of his concern, the writer emphasizes that he in no way wishes to imply censure, individually or collectively, of persons mentioned in this paper. In the years that he has been associated with geography-education in Lakehead University, Canada (1970-1974) and in the University of Newcastle (1974-) he

has been happy to meet many able students. But he has also been struck by a widespread lack of "basic world knowledge" (call it what one will). This is not a localized problem. It is particularly regrettable to perceive among university graduates of differing universities and disciplines who are intent upon becoming teachers in various subject areas and spheres. Such persons often are, using a commonly-heard phrase, "products of the system": a system that increasingly eliminates examinations (rather than seeking to improve them); a system that is remarkably unselective in matters of entry into teacher-education programmes; and a system that, at least to this writer, sometimes gives the impression that one does not need to know anything. One must be able to talk about something, it is true: but to digest it fully and to understand it: no! "We can always look it up in a book!" seems to be the catch-phrase among some who appear to have slipped through "the system" without any intellectual or other demands' really being made upon them. In these instances, one wonders what each would say if the same retort were given to his or her question: "Who is the captain of the 1975 Australian cricket team?" or (in the U. S. A.) "Who plays goal for the Boston Bruins?"

Some Indications of the Lack of Basic World Knowledge

(a) Location of Cities

In 1971, G. P. Mason and E. E. Owen submitted data which they thought might be useful in helping teachers to decide what events and places would "be deemed worthy of teaching time".[5] They listed "the 75 most visible cities" evident in The New York Times during the years 1960 to 1969. In March, 1975, a questionnaire comprising this list of cities (although not in rank order, and with the exception of "Hong Kong") was given to each of the twenty-four University of Newcastle

(N. S. W.) graduates in geography admitted to the Diploma in Education secondary school geography-methods course of the same university. The questionnaire asked the student teacher to mention the name of the country in which each of the seventy-four cities was located. (If a particular name -- such as Cairo or London -- conjured up more than one city in the respondent's mind, he or she was to consider the larger or largest according to population size.) By such means, it was thought that some indication of "basic world knowledge" could be ascertained. As might be expected, cities such as Canberra, Sydney and London provided no difficulty to any. On the other hand, not one of the twenty-four graduates could correctly identify either Accra or Amman and only one person in each instance identified Bucharest, Caracas, Lagos, La Paz, and Santiago -- places often mentioned in the media of recent months (Table 1). Eighteen months earlier (in September, 1973), the same "test" had been given to the fifteen Canadian university geography graduates who entered the same kind of methods course in Lakehead University (Thunder Bay, Ontario). Fairly similar results were found. Thus, for example, while there was little doubt about the name of the country in which Cairo, Cape Town or Rome was located, not one correctly identified either Accra or Dar-es-Salaam (Table 1). It could be argued strongly that the main city of one of Africa's first independent countries should be better known in geographical circles!

In some instances, the two geography groups show quite marked differences in their proportions of response. For example, while three quarters of the Australian group correctly identified Kuala Lumpur, none of the Canadians could do so. On the other hand, only one fifth of the Australians knew that Helsinki was in Finland -- a "fact" known to almost all of the Canadians. Are such differences linked with one's location on the globe[6] or with, say, local peculiarities such as Thunder Bay's

Table 1

Knowledge of Cities

	University Graduates entering a one-year teacher education programme				Rank Order of Visibility[1] (Mason and Owen)
	Geography Graduates		Graduates of Other Disciplines		
	University of Newcastle (NSW)	Lakehead University (Ont.)	University of Newcastle (NSW)	Lakehead University (Ont.)	
	N = 24	N = 15	N = 120	N = 60	
CANBERRA	100.0	66.7	100.0	33.3	74
SYDNEY	100.0	100.0	100.0	86.7	63
LONDON[2]	100.0	100.0	100.0	98.3	1
TOKYO	100.0	93.3	100.0	98.3	7
MOSCOW[3]	100.0	93.3	98.3	100.0	2
PEKING	100.0	100.0	97.5	91.7	13
PARIS	95.8	100.0	99.2	96.7	4
BERLIN (West)	95.8	93.3	91.7	95.0	10
ATHENS	95.8	100.0	90.8	91.7	16
NEW DELHI	95.8	73.3	88.3	73.3	8
SAIGON	95.8	86.7	87.5	80.0	3
DUBLIN	95.8	100.0	81.6	90.0	69
CAPE TOWN	95.8	86.7	74.2	66.7	60
ROME	91.6	93.3	94.2	98.3	5
FRANKFURT	87.5	100.0	85.8	91.7	69
CAIRO	87.5	86.7	84.2	70.0	11
HANOI	87.5	86.7	81.6	63.3	15
JOHANNESBURG	83.3	73.3	65.0	56.7	42
BONN	79.2	93.3	76.7	71.7	6
GENEVA	79.2	86.7	73.3	75.0	14
DJAKARTA	75.0	26.7	84.2	8.3	23
BANGKOK	75.0	33.3	58.3	15.0	39
KUALA LUMPUR	75.0	0.0	58.3	1.7	46
JERUSALEM	70.8	46.7	70.8	65.0	12
WARSAW	66.7	66.7	70.8	71.7	18
PHNOM PENH	62.5	53.3	55.8	18.3	60
MANILA	62.5	13.3	42.5	10.0	30
STOCKHOLM	58.3	100.0	66.7	76.7	44
TEL AVIV	58.3	53.3	60.0	55.0	28
LISBON	58.3	60.0	48.3	35.0	37
SINGAPORE	58.3	20.0	40.0	3.3	69
SEOUL	58.3	40.0	37.5	35.0	20
RIO DE JANEIRO	50.0	73.3	56.7	51.7	22
LIMA	50.0	86.7	53.3	73.3	45
COPENHAGEN	50.0	60.0	45.8	58.3	75
VIENNA	45.8	60.0	58.3	56.7	20
SALISBURY[4]	45.8	40.0	45.0	23.3	32
OSLO	45.8	93.3	35.8	71.7	63

Table 1 (Continued)

Knowledge of Cities

	University Graduates entering a one-year teacher education programme				Rank Order of Visibility[1] (Mason and Owen)
	Geography Graduates		Graduates of Other Disciplines		
	University of Newcastle (NSW)	Lakehead University (Ont.)	University of Newcastle (NSW)	Lakehead University (Ont.)	
	N = 24	N = 15	N = 120	N = 60	
BRUSSELS	41.7	40.0	30.0	40.0	24
COLOMBO	41.7	0.0	27.5	0.0	58
ISTANBUL	37.5	60.0	55.0	46.7	48
VIENTIANE	37.5	6.7	12.5	1.7	25
ADDIS ABABA	33.3	6.7	21.7	11.7	51
THE HAGUE	29.2	40.0	47.5	25.0	47
PRAGUE	29.2	26.7	32.5	33.3	30
KARACHI	29.2	20.0	21.7	1.7	32
NAIROBI	25.0	26.7	25.8	18.3	32
TUNIS	25.0	20.0	25.0	20.0	58
TAIPEH	25.0	0.0	20.8	8.3	32
KHATMANDU	25.0	0.0	18.3	3.3	57
BUENOS AIRES	20.8	33.3	29.2	28.3	27
NICOSIA	20.8	6.7	23.3	3.3	42
HELSINKI	20.8	86.7	22.5	56.7	68
ANKARA	20.8	13.3	21.7	10.0	53
DAMASCUS	20.8	20.0	10.8	11.7	53
BUDAPEST	16.7	46.7	35.8	46.7	67
ALGIERS	16.7	53.3	35.0	35.0	26
BEIRUT	16.7	46.7	17.5	28.3	17
TEHRAN	16.7	6.7	16.7	5.0	55
ADEN	12.5	0.0	8.3	3.3	55
BELGRADE	8.3	33.3	15.0	15.0	29
BOGOTA	8.3	20.0	5.8	13.3	73
DAR ES SALAAM	8.3	0.0	3.3	1.7	69
SANTIAGO	4.2	53.3	18.3	46.7	51
CARACAS	4.2	33.3	8.3	28.3	40
LAGOS	4.2	6.7	5.8	5.0	38
LA PAZ	4.2	6.7	5.0	11.7	60
BUCHAREST	4.2	6.7	4.2	5.0	63
AMMAN	0.0	26.7	11.7	13.3	49
KINSHASA[5]	0.0	0.0	5.8	1.7	18
ACCRA	0.0	0.0	1.7	0.0	32
GEORGETOWN	0.0	0.0	0.8	1.7	49
LUBUMBASHI[6]	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7	41
KATANGA[7]	-	-	-	-	63

[1] The ninth in rank order is "Hong Kong" (omitted from this Table).
[2] Most Canadian respondents linked London with "England".
[3] Most respondents linked Moscow with "Russia".
[4] Generally, Salisbury was linked as much with the U. K. as with Rhodesia. (Both associations were considered correct.)
[5] Mason and Owen use the word "Leopoldville".
[6] Mason and Owen use the word "Elisabethville".
[7] Mason and Owen included this word (a former province in what-is-now Zaire).

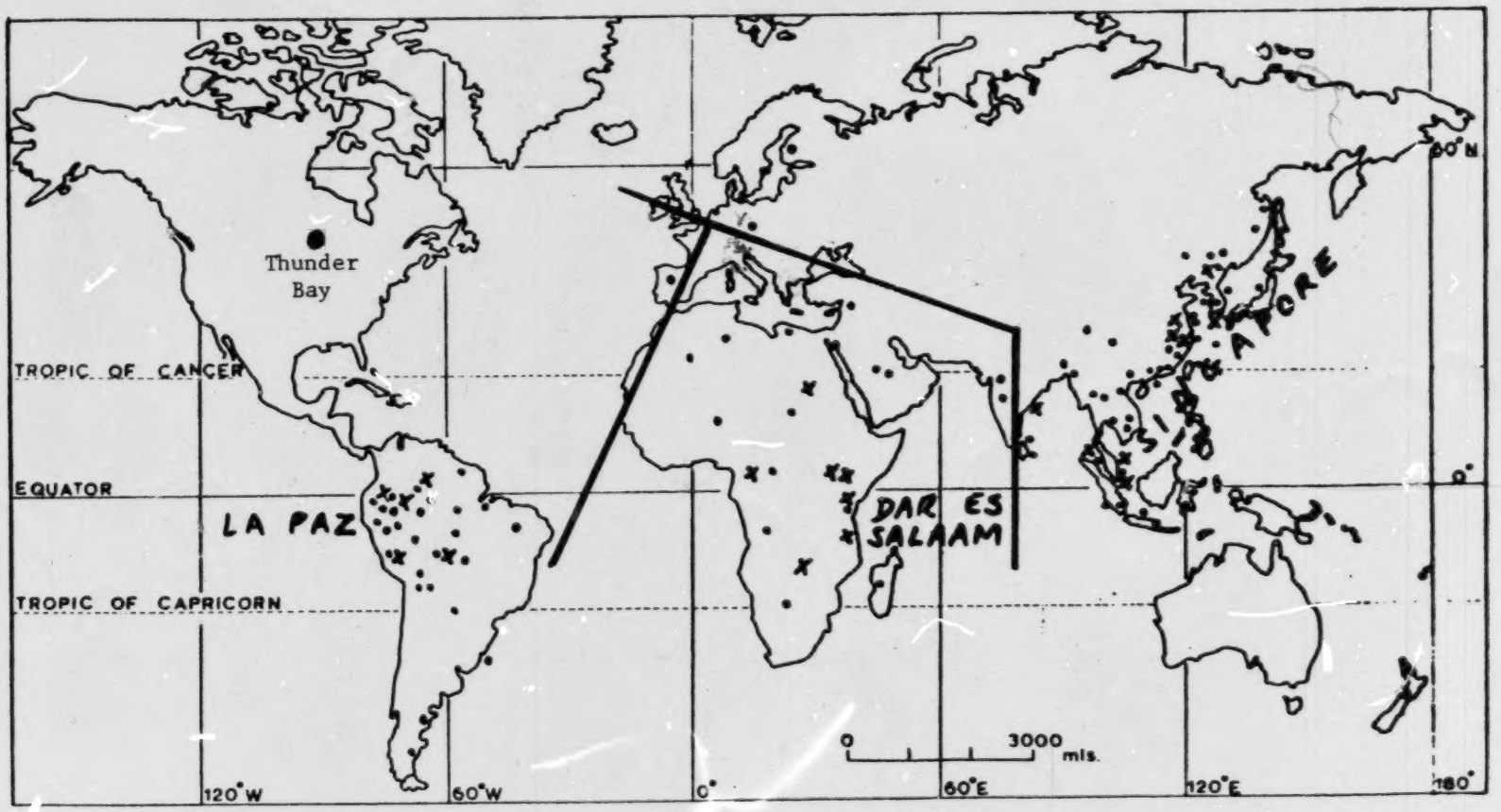
having a large number of Finnish immigrants? Whatever be the answers to such questions (and they would necessarily require much more extensive sampling), the overall point remains: that persons who have apparently experienced at least fifteen years of formal education include surprisingly large proportions knowing very little or nothing about certain places likely to enter the headlines of tomorrow's newspapers. This is evident, too, when one looks at the responses to the Mason and Owen list of cities by a randomly-selected group of sixty Canadian university university graduates in various disciplines who entered Lakehead University's one-year teacher-education programme in September, 1973. Not one of the sixty was able to mention the country in which either Accra or Colombo is located. Similarly, the responses of a randomly-selected group of 120 university graduates' entering the University of Newcastle's Diploma in Education programme in March, 1975 show that only seven or fewer could, in each instance, identify Accra, Bucharest, Dar-es-Salaam, and La Paz (Table 1).[7]

Although each geographer group in toto attempted slightly more questions than its parallel "non-geography" group,[8] there is little reason to suppose that a more informed or intelligent guessing was generally employed in the case of attempted, but wrong, answers. For instance, one error drawn at random from those evident within each of the thirty-nine Australian or Canadian geography graduates' questionnaires makes two lists as follows:

Australian		Canadian	
City	Answer Given	City	Answer Given
CAIRO	INDIA	ACCRA	SAUDI ARABIA
VIENNA	ITALY	BELGRADE	IRELAND
PRAGUE	YOGOSLAVIA sic	SINGAPORE	JAPAN
THE HAGUE	DENMARK	ALGIERS	RUSSIA
LIMA	AFRICA	LA PAZ	COLUMBIA sic
WARSAW	GERMANY	CANBERRA	AFRICA
SINGAPORE	TURKEY	COLOMBO	VENEZUELA
ISTANBUL	ALGERIA	VIENNA	SWITZERLAND
BELGRADE	BELGIUM	DAR ES SALAAM	SAUDI ARABIA
TEL AVIV	ARABIA	KARACHI	VENZULA sic
COPENHAGEN	CANADA	COPENHAGEN	HOLLAND
DAR ES SALAAM	SPAIN	VIENTIANE	SPAIN
JERUSALEM	GREECE	ISTANBUL	GREESE sic
LISBON	SPAIN	DJARKARTA	INDIA
HELSINKI	HUNGARY	LAGOS	CAMBODIA
PRAGUE	BELGIUM		
SALISBURY	GERMANY		
STOCKHOLM	HOLLAND		
ROME	GREECE		
NAIROBI	NIGERIA		
TEHRAN	LEBANON		
ALGIERS	TANGIERS		
RIO DE JANEIRO	MEXICO		
PARIS	SPAIN		

A person's knowing the name of the country in which a particular city is located is not necessarily linked, of course, with his or her being able to mark the city's position with any accuracy upon an outline map, or even find its position with any ease in an atlas. For instance, when the seventy-five Canadian graduates (including fifteen geographers) were each asked to mark the position of Singapore on an outline map of the world, only two (or 2.67 per cent) implicitly indicated an understanding of the "hinge" position of the port between two oceans (Figure 1). Figure 1 also shows the Canadian graduates' indications of

00013



✗ Location marked by a geography graduate

• Location marked by a graduate in another discipline

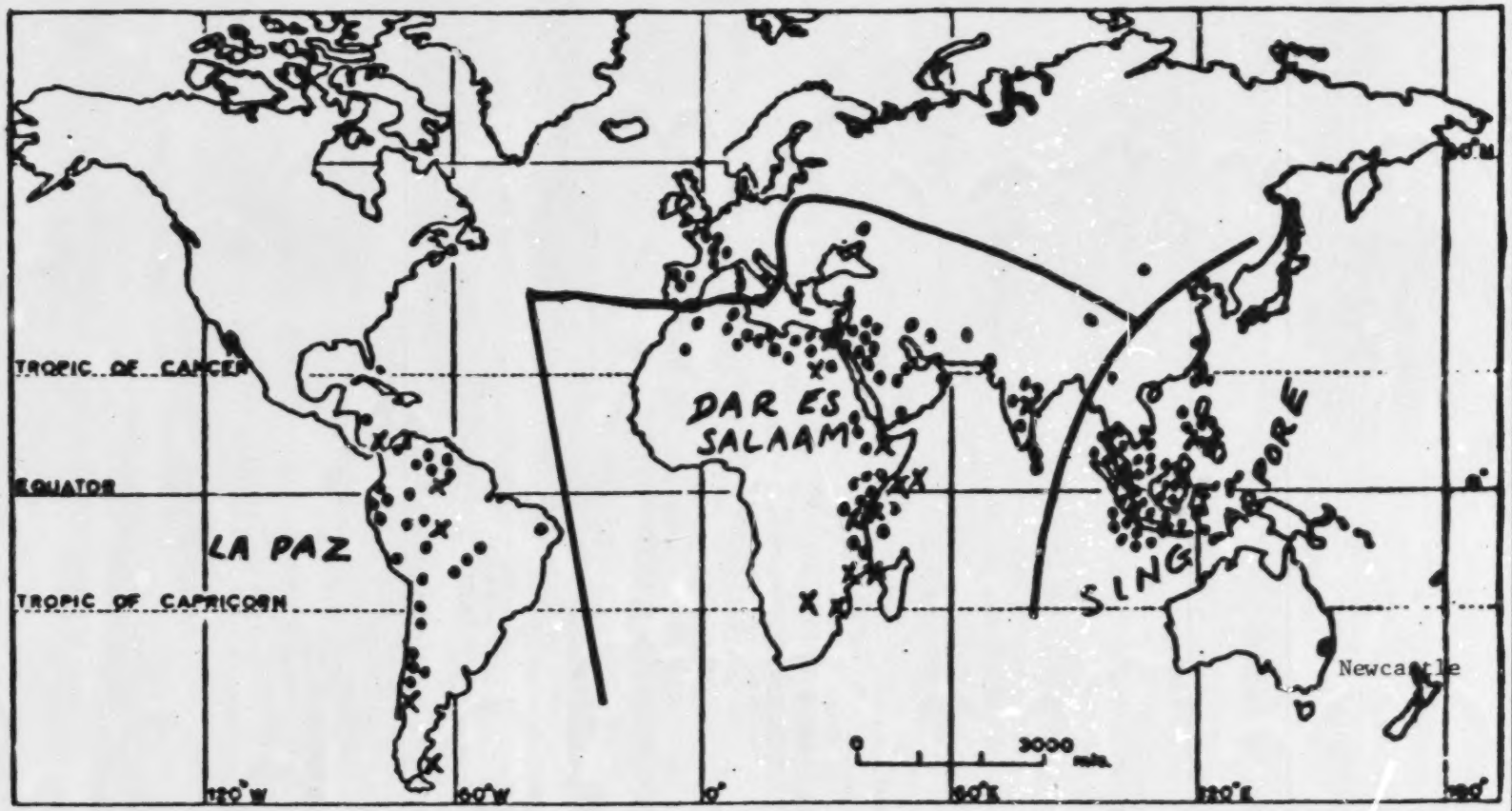
Figure 1

Locations of La Paz, Dar-es-Salaam, and Singapore Marked by Canadian University Graduates on a World Outline Map: Lakehead University, September, 1973

the positions of Dar-es-Salaam and La Paz -- two cities likely to enter media headlines of the late 1970's -- and, comparably, Figure 2 shows indications of the three cities given by the 144 Australian graduates (including twenty-four geographers). Table 2a shows the proportions of Australian and Canadian graduates who were correct or who avoided guessing and gave no answer.

(b) Location of Countries

In September, 1973, at the time of Professor Hills' urging geographers to support the work of OXFAM in Mali and nearby countries (supra), each of the seventy-five Canadian graduates was asked to mark the positions of the following countries on a world map: Mali, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. Only one geographer (out of fifteen) shaded the map with reasonable accuracy and no more than two of the sixty other graduates did likewise. Altogether no more than eighteen areas of shading to show Mali's position appeared on the seventy-five maps: four in the position of Kalimantan, three in the position of southern India, and eight in a position ranging latitudinally from that of eastern Siberia to that of Botswana (Figure 3). Remarkably, three fifths of the geographers and four fifths of the sixty other graduates made no attempt even to guess the position of this much-publicized country -- a country that had already been seen by a number of intrepid Canadian volunteer workers (Table 2b). While no more than two (or 13.3 per cent) of the geographers and six (or 10.0 per cent) of the other graduates indicated positions for Mozambique that "loosely" may be considered correct, only one person -- a graduate of physical education -- correctly indicated the position of Guinea-Bissau (Table 2b)! Two months later, Guinea-Bissau was formally recognized by the United Nations' General Assembly. During the rest of the 1973-1974 academic year, hardly a week went by without some mention of Portugal's African colonies on the "national" Canadian T. V. and radio networks.



✗ Location marked by a geography graduate

● Location marked by a graduate in another discipline

Figure 2

Locations of La Paz, Dar-es-Salaam, and Singapore Marked by Australian University Graduates on a World Outline Map: University of Newcastle, March, 1975

Table 2

Knowledge of Locations of Selected Cities and Countries

		Canadian Geography Graduates N = 15			Canadian Graduates of Other Disciplines N = 60			Australian Geography Graduates N = 24			Australian Graduates of Other Disciplines N = 120		
		Correct	Incorrect	No Answer Given	Correct	Incorrect	No Answer Given	Correct	Incorrect	No Answer Given	Correct	Incorrect	No Answer Given
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
a.	DAR ES SALAAM	13.3	33.3	53.4	1.7	25.0	73.3	33.3	20.9	45.8	4.2	36.7	59.1
	LA PAZ	13.3	20.0	66.7	10.0	35.0	55.0	4.2	16.7	79.1	4.2	30.0	65.8
	SINGAPORE (CITY)	6.7	53.3	40.0	1.7	71.7	26.6	100.0	0.0	0.0	60.8	33.3	5.9
b.	GUINEA-BISSAU	0.0	33.3	66.7	1.7	48.3	50.0	12.5	20.8	66.7	9.2	43.3	47.5
	MALI	6.7	33.3	60.0	3.3	16.7	80.0	16.7	12.5	70.8	5.0	24.2	70.8
	MOZAMBIQUE	13.3	46.7	40.0	10.0	30.0	60.0	33.3	37.5	29.2	19.2	49.2	31.6

00016

00017

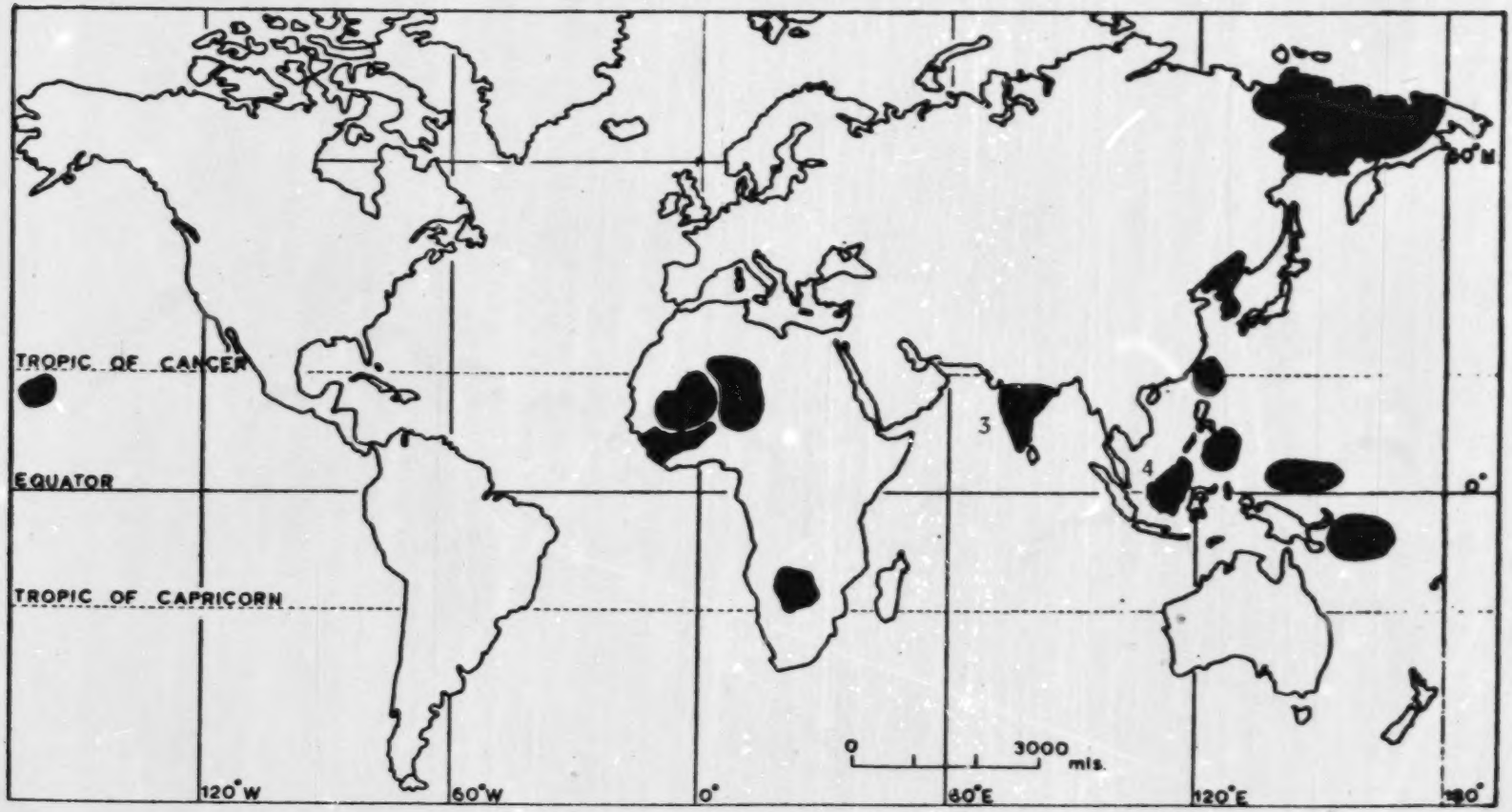


Figure 3

Locations of Mali Marked by Canadian University Graduates
on a World Outline Map: Lakehead University,
September, 1973

Similarly, Guinea-Bissau and Mali and, to a lesser extent, Mozambique were largely unknown to the 144 Australian graduates (including twenty-four geographers) in March, 1975 (Table 2b and Figure 4). Scarcely a day has gone by since that time without Portugal's, Guinea-Bissau's, Mozambique's and the other Portuguese overseas' territories' being mentioned in the media.

Basic World Knowledge and the Anticipation of World Events

Evidence of the above kind, then, together with countless undocumented examples, has caused the writer reluctantly to believe that there is a widespread and quite unnecessary lack of "basic world knowledge" among many who are genuinely interested in becoming effective teachers,whether in geography, the social sciences generally or any other school area. What is "basic world knowledge?" Whatever be the definition (and, hopefully there may be at least as many definitions as there are geographers), if it is to be basic, it will have aspects that readily link with elements of the natural sciences, the applied sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities. If it is to be world knowledge, it will be global in its conceptions though advisedly based upon a sound understanding of the home district and country. It will be, then, neither unthinkingly ethnocentric nor narrowly parochial. If it is to be educational, it must be humane and as such likely to enthuse, inspire, stimulate and, if necessary, aggravate. Professor Hills' letter (supra) was motivated by, and was dependent upon its readers' having, certain facets of "basic world knowledge" -- knowledge of the kind that can readily be seen in many popular as well as professional journals and papers. Another example of such knowledge is one's knowing what the letters FAO mean, and what spirit and action lie behind them.

00019

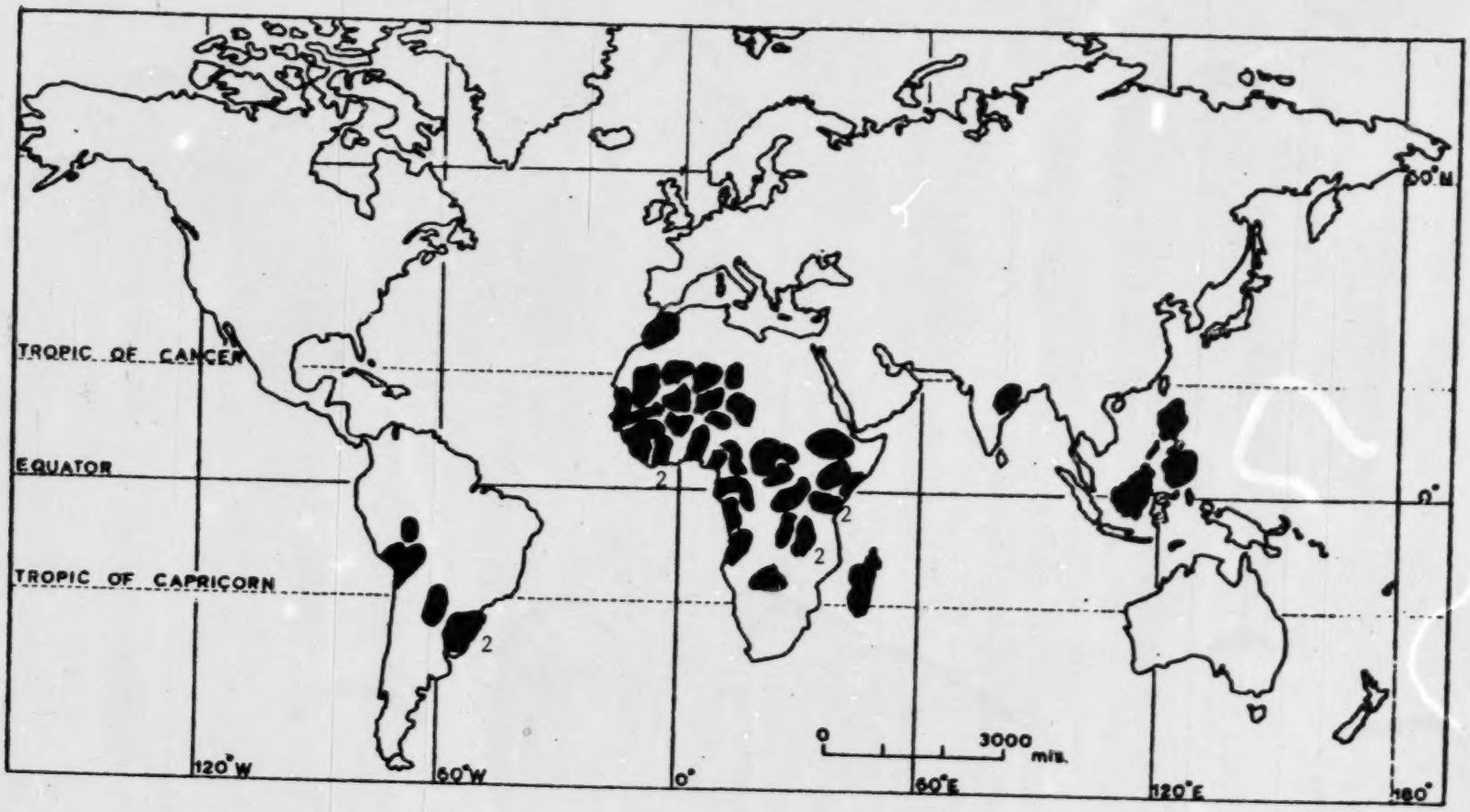


Figure 4

Locations of Mali Marked by Australian University Graduates
on a World Outline Map: University of Newcastle,
March, 1975

Yet, out of 120 university graduates (including thirty geographers) who entered a teacher-education programme at Lakehead University in either 1972 or 1973, only three (or 2.5 per cent) could give appropriate meaning to such letters!

It seems possible that the above evidence of "basic world" ignorance among geography and other university graduates may not be very representative of the Australian, Canadian or American scene. Even if this is so, the writer stresses that there is no reason for any person to be allowed to pass through fifteen years of "the system" and be so unaware of the world. He also believes that, for most -- if not all -- of the Mason and Owen "visible cities and countries",[9] every university geography graduate in the years to come (whether intending to be a teacher or not) should be able to mark its position on a regional or world map; enjoy making an intelligent comment about its probable importance to his or her continent and to the world; and know where he or she can "look up" information (such as in the FAO Yearbook) concerning more facts, concepts and ideas about the milieu in which the city or country is located. Ideally, other cities should be added to this general principle: Port Kembla, Khabarovsk, Khartoum, Kobe and Kuwait which, for one reason or another, are also likely to enter tomorrow's headlines. More importantly, every intending (let alone practising) geography lecturer or teacher should judiciously be able to anticipate quite a number of future world events. This is seen to be applicable whatever the level of the educational process in which he or she will work. In those cases -- more common at a Class 12 or college level -- where the intending teacher might become largely concerned with one facet of the discipline or subject, "basic world knowledge" and the anticipation of world events can assist in broader representation being given to computer-

map reading, drumlins, market location, pollution, water storage, or diffusion theory. A suggested "list of events" thought likely to be seen (or still seen) in the news headlines of the years 1976 to 1995 is given in Table 3. It is suggested in the hope that the reader will be encouraged to formulate his own list and to consider what may be "the most visible cities and countries" of the next decade or two (rather than the past decade).

A Geography with a Global Soul

How can "basic world knowledge" be learned? By rote-learning? Decidedly -- NO! (What would we think of a soccer "fan" who had consciously memorized a list of Cape Breton football players' names so that he might become a "fan"?) We have come a long way from the nineteenth century but, soon, we shall be living in the twenty-first! "Basic world knowledge" is an outcome of personal attitude as much as anything else, particularly in affluent societies where there are so many readily- available materials and media. Such knowledge can be learned almost unintentionally over a period of twelve years (let alone fifteen), especially in any education where the student readily finds interest, stimulation and challenge in field-work, lessons, and other experiences which, if only occasionally, refer to various parts of the world. A geography that is geared to the world can be a great help in education -- an education that is concerned with all facets of the student's personality: knowledge, skills, emotions, and attitudes. AUSTRALOgraphy in New South Wales or Tasmania, AMERICOgraphy in California or Newfoundland, SCANDINAVOgraphy in Norway or Denmark, and other "geographies" that at times scarcely extend beyond the home country's milieu, can be helpful too. But in a world of 4,500,000,000 where famine, floods, pestilence, poverty, and war are still rampant, a geography with a global soul can do so much more!

Table 3

Topics of the Future:

1976-1995

La Paz and the Bolivia/Chile Boundary.

Earthquakes in Ecuador, Iran, Indonesia and the U. S. A.

Oil from the Arctic.

Paraguay and Rwanda: Enclosed States.

Sea Canals in the U. S. S. R. and in Panama.

Famine in Bangla Desh and Uttah Pradesh.

The Damodar Multi-purpose Project and the T. V. A.

Algeria, Namibia, and Rhodesia.

Sinkiang: A Sleeping Giant?

Manufacturing in Brazil and Rumania.

Zambezi and Blue Nile water.

Trans-Saharan routes.

Hydro-electric power in Quebec.

Wheat Prices in the U. S. A.

Empty Lands and Empty Stomachs.

A Western African Revolution.

Urban Renewal in Rio de Janeiro.

Lake Levels in East Africa.

West Nebraska and the Kra Isthmus: Forgotten "Panhandles"?

China and India: A Widening Gulf.

Zambian Copper and Tanzania.

Bloodshed in Southern Africa.

Coal in Australia and Canada.

Social Unrest in Central and South America.

Tunnels under La Manche and under Japanese waters.

Tourism in the Pacific.

Guinea-Bissau and Papua: Twenty Years of Independence.

Nuclear Arms Testing in Central Asia.

Roads across the Amazon Basin.

The Galapagos and the Queen Charlottes: Forgotten Islands?

Urban Changes in China.

Aboriginal peoples in the Southern Hemisphere.

Off-shore fishing rights.

The World Health Organization.

Basques and Catalans.

The Enigma of Jordan.

The Phoenix of Poland.

Italian and Yugoslav Relations.

Missile Sites in the Arctic.

Antarctic Territorial Rights.

Caribbean Inequities.

Glaciers in the Andes and the Alps.

British Columbia and Quebec: Separate States?

Discontent in Cyprus and Angola.

Lapland and Kurdistan: A Comparison.

The Chinese in Malaysia.

Hong Kong and Macao.

Cuba and Florida.

The Oder-Neisse Boundary.

The Soviet Navy and the Indian Ocean ports.

Mississippi Routes and Floods.

The Airport of Ho Chi Minh City.

Twenty Strategic Cities:

Accra	Brussels	Caracas	Colombo	Dakar
Dar-es-Salaam	Hamburg	Hamburg	Istanbul	Kashgar
Beira or L.M.	Marseille	Nakhodka	Port-of-Spain	Salisbury (Rhodesia)
Suez	Taipeh	Tashkent	Singapore	Trieste.

00022

How can geography at all levels of education be given more global soul? This matter is complex and must be dealt with elsewhere. A few suggestions for further consideration, however, come immediately to mind. That there may be need for:

1. much greater selectivity of entrants into geography teacher-education programmes with regard to personal attitude as well as to academic ability;
2. greater numbers and a greater variety of university geography courses concerned with other parts of the world, especially with Africa, "Latin America", and the whole of Asia;[10]
3. greater infusion, where appropriate, of Third World examples into university geography courses, whether in geomorphology or in, say, social geography;
4. greater exchange of geography scholars between the Third World and the affluent Western World;
5. greater numbers of persons (well qualified in geography and in education) to serve in university pre-service and in-service programmes for geography and social science teachers;
6. ensuring that, in addition to "Local Geography" and, say, "The Geography of the Home Country", a course on "The Geography of World Affairs" is available -- indeed, mandatory -- in all primary and secondary schools;
7. an increased emphasis, at all levels of education, upon the need for a student's being able to read maps and to draw sketch-maps appropriately, whether in "geography" or in other subject areas;[11] and:
8. increased recognition of the idea that the essence of geography in primary and secondary education need not necessarily always emulate or reflect the nature of its evolving academic parent in the universities.

In considering each of the above eight suggestions, the reader is invited to reflect upon the four vignettes on page 2 of this paper. They occurred in the affluent Western World in 1974 or 1975 and appear to be relevant to any who will lecture in or teach geography in the last quarter of the twentieth century, whatever his or her position in the educational process.

Whatever geography at any level in a materially-affluent society might suitably be, it should surely be a major factor in curbing indifference or basic ignorance of the world. In the words of Preston James:

> If geography ceases to introduce students to a systematically organized picture of the world in which we live, some other subject-matter field will be called upon to fill this need.12

And, in the words of Queen Elizabeth the Second in her Christmas message of 1973:

> I was reminded of the importance of human relations in world affairs . . . It is too easy for us to forget the unfortunate . . . . A lack of humanity can be very destructive.

Let us make sure that geography will not be destroyed either by a lack of "a systematically organized picture of the world" or by "a lack of humanity" in its spirit and purposes!

FOOTNOTES

[1] J. B. Burrough and P.A. Burrough, "A Plea for Clearer Geographical Writing or Defog that Geog!", Geography Bulletin (NSW), Vol. 6 (December, 1974), p. 112.

[2] Italics mine.

[3] See, for example, Time (Canada), April 8, 1974, pp. 32-33.

[4] See, for example, "Guinea-Bissau: The Jungle War", Newsweek (USA), December 10, 1973, p. 70.

[5] G.P. Mason and E.E. Owen, "The Most Visible Countries and Cities", The Journal of Geography, Vol. 70 (May, 1971), pp. 260-262.

[6] See P. Gould and R. White, Mental Maps (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974), pp. 119-156.

[7] The 120 graduates include 106 (or 83.3 per cent) that hold University of Newcastle degrees.

[8] The average number of correct answers for each group is as follows: Newcastle N=24 (34.8 correct) and N=120 (35.0 correct); Lakehead University N=15 (37.9 correct) and N=60 (39.9 correct). In the case of Lakehead, 54.8 questions were attempted by the geographers and 46.0 questions by the other graduates.

[9] Mason and Owen, op. cit., p. 261.

[10] None of the university graduates in geography who entered a Lakehead University geography-methods course between 1970 and 1974 had, in his or her opinion, experienced a programme in which any part of Asia or Australasia was emphasized. Only one geography graduate, in each case, out of 64, considered that "Latin America", the U.S.S.R. and "eastern Europe" had been emphasized in his geography degree programme. (One half of the graduates had taken a Lakehead University B. A. in Geography: the others had come from twelve other Ontario universities and from three American universities.)

[11] See J. H. Wise, "The Use of Sketch Maps in Teaching About Africa", in Africa: Teaching Perspectives and Approaches edited by J. Willmer. National Council for Geographic Education Pacesetter Book (Tualatin, Oregon: Geographic and Area Study Publications, 1975), pp. 354-365.

[12] P. E. James, "Introductory Geography: Topical or Regional?", The Journal of Geography, Vol. 66 (1967), p. 53.